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COLUMN

Adviser talks about her H1N1 scare; ready to move on

The irony, is that I was scheduled to get my flu shot on that Friday. On Thursday, I went home with a sore throat and then by evening a cough and body aches set in. On Friday I had a fever. Saturday I went to the ER and was told to go home and take Tylenol and drink plenty of fluids. Saturday and Sunday came diarrhea and vomiting. I wasn't eating. I was trying to keep fluids down and I was losing the fight. I have never had anything hit me so fast and so hard in my life.

On Tuesday, October 20, my sister took me to North Kansas City Hospital. My temperature was over 101 and my oxygen levels hovered at 84. I was put on oxygen, blood gases drawn, blood drawn, urine taken, chest x-ray taken, medicine swallowed and IVs started. I was in the ER for over five hours before they finalized

my diagnosis and had a room ready for me.

When your white blood count is 2.5 and your urine is so toxic it won't even take a culture, you know that you are one sick chick. I was diagnosed with H1N1, bilateral pneumonia with complete upper respiratory failure.

I was admitted into the hospital and placed in isolation. Thursday evening low oxygen gas levels landed me in cardiac ICU. They put me there so I would have one nurse dedicated to my care.

On Friday the doctors said that if my oxygen levels didn't improve that I would have to be placed on a respirator. Another doctor told me if I didn't start recovering soon from H1N1 that he was going to



Laura Widmer
Adviser

call the Center for Disease Control and see if I qualified for an experimental drug.

I just looked up the IV pole and saw five bags hanging. My antibiotic cocktail wasn't working. One of the nurses said I was fighting the idea of breathing. They increased my

oxygen to 16 units as they attempted to get my oxygen gas levels to nudge over the 90 mark. It was a slow process.

Friday night was tough. I was in acute respiratory distress. I hadn't really been able to get much extended sleep during this time, but I did sleep long enough to dream about my Mom and Dad, who were watching over me in heaven, that night. That evening,

as I was in and out of sleep, I felt Mom patting my left shoulder. She was with me all night long and that was the touch, my reassurance that everything was going to be OK. How many times did she give me that reassurance growing up, and now she came back to help her 53-year-old baby girl during the toughest fight of her life.

On Monday night I moved out of cardiac ICU and back to isolation. Although I was still on oxygen and an antibiotic cocktail of IVs, I was breathing better and my oxygen gas levels were higher.

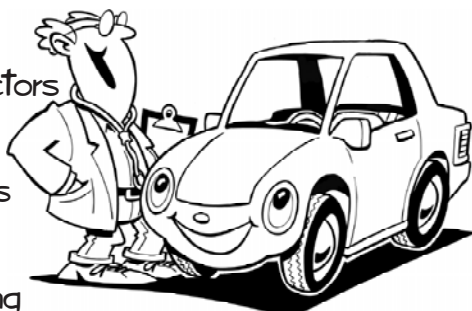
After a couple of days in isolation, it was time to head to rehab unit. I hadn't been out of bed in eight days, and thus I needed help to walk again. I would have a week of respiratory therapy, physical therapy and occupational therapy before I could go home.

I wasn't able to return to work for the rest of the fall trimester. I went home one week for Christmas and returned in January ready to ease into spring semester. However, that wasn't meant to be. On January 5, I was readmitted to North Kansas City Hospital with pneumonia and that's when we found out, the H1N1 not only attacked my lungs, but also attacked the mitral valve in my heart. I was in the hospital eight days.

I am gaining on it every day, but I'm not back to full speed yet. I'll mend. I'll get stronger, but H1N1 changed my life. It has been a very long road to recovery. I've had time to think, pray and meditate on my life. It's been a struggle, but it's made me realize I have fabulous students and outstanding friends. There's a lot to be thankful for, and a lot to look forward to.

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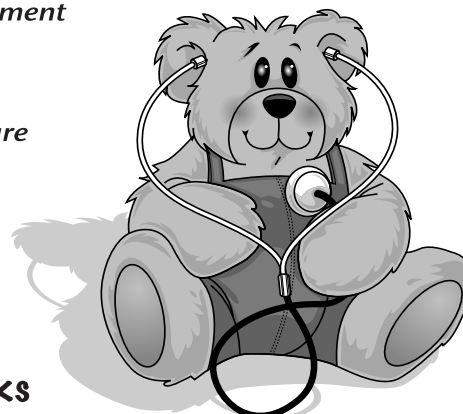
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MS WALK

A step closer to a cure

Volunteers walk through campus to raise money, awareness for cause

By Brian Johnson
Features Editor

On a beautiful Saturday morning, while most people were still in bed, a group of people walked through campus for a special cause. The National Multiple Sclerosis Society held a Walk for MS event for one reason: to make a step towards a world that no longer has Multiple Sclerosis.

The event was a fundraiser for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, and over 150 walkers participated. Program manager Erica Kiehnhoff felt that the event proved successful.

"It went really well," Kiehnhoff said. "It was a perfect day for it, and we were very happy."

Kiehnhoff is a social worker with the MS Society and has been employed by them for four and a half years. She oversees services for people living with MS across 159 counties in Kansas and Missouri.

While she did not have a personal experience with MS before this, she said that she had been interested in the project when nobody had stepped up to the plate.

"When I took the position, we didn't have any direct services for people living with MS," Kiehnhoff said. "So I was excited to cultivate and design some programs that would really impact the individual living with MS."

Kiehnhoff said that since she has taken the position, they have been able to meet the needs of over 8,000 people living with MS. The cornerstone of getting these people help is in the fundraising, like the Walk.

On Saturday, people of all different ages walked for a cure. There were many families, young and old and a couple of teams that organized to raise money. Those involved got to choose between a one and a half mile route or a three-mile route to walk through campus.

While raising money is a goal, another goal of the Walk is to help raise awareness. Kiehnhoff feels that there may be some things about MS that people may not necessarily know and should know.

"MS affects over 400,000 people in the United States and it's typically diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 50," Kiehnhoff said. "It's a disease that affects every person differently. Most of the symptoms people deal with that are living with MS are not physical to the naked eye."

Kiehnhoff said that some of these symptoms include pain and fatigue.

The Walk is one of the MS society's primary fundraisers, and the Mid-America chapter has been doing this event for over 50 years. Another event that the MS society does is Bike MS, which is a bike ride to help raise funds.

"We would just like to send a message that we just really want to raise awareness," Kiehnhoff said. "It not only affects the person living with MS but their family and we're here to provide them with information and support and services when they do need those services."

Kiehnhoff also added that the way they spread this message is through these fundraising events. While the amount that was raised is still being figured out, the message of the Walk came through clear.



PARTICIPANTS OF THE Multiple Sclerosis Walk stroll down Icon Road during their 3 mile walk. Over 150 walkers showed up at the Union on Saturday morning to show support for the cause.

photo by lori frankenfield | photo editor

JASS SALON

New machine aids in weight loss by helping body break down fat

By A.J. Martin
Missourian Reporter

With summer fast approaching, everyone is looking for ways to lose some extra inches off of their waists.

Jass Salon here in Maryville has recently purchased a new machine that will help sweat away the pounds.

According to Aaron M. Flickstein the creator of FIT Bodywrap, The FIT Bodywrap is scientifically shown to burn more calories in 60 minutes than running in a marathon.

According to Flickstein, the product uses infrared heat rays to essentially make the body sweat. Although the heat does not make the fat leave your body, it does break down the stored fat and converts it into fatty acids

that are used by the muscles for energy.

He said as your body heats, you begin to sweat to cool down your body. The sweat is fueled by the energy converted from the fatty acids and therefore burning calories as well as increasing blood flow to the extremities.

The bodywrap also has shown to improve ailments such as arthritis, back pain and muscle pain, as well as joint discomfort.

Jass Salon owner Jenny Mullen has also equipped the room with a flat screen television and a radio for the customers to use while they are using the body wrap.

Mullen has used the product herself and recommends that anyone looking for extra help with weight loss should come in

and try it out.

"The main focus of the product is to help with weight loss, but I also find it extremely relaxing," Mullen said. "It is a lot different than getting into a tanning booth because the heat is a much more soothing heat than that of a tanning bed."

Although the machine is a great tool to help lose weight, she stressed that people must not use this as the main way to go about losing weight.

"People definitely need to couple this machine with proper diet and exercise to achieve maximum weight loss results," Mullen said.

It is also important to consult your doctor if you have any complications such as certain prescription medicines, implants, hemorrhaging or pregnancy.



photo by hilary dohrman | missourian photographer

JASS SALON EMPLOYEE Sterling Swayze demonstrates how the FIT Bodywrap works. The bodywrap is a good supplement to diet and exercise to lose weight.

The FIT Bodywrap is available for use during regular business hours, and costs \$25 for one 50 minute session.

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ST. FRANCIS FUNDRAISER

Annual golf tournament to raise money for new equipment

By Matthew Leimkuehler
Chief Reporter

The 20th annual Tobin Benefit Golf Classic, sponsored by the St. Francis Hospital foundation, will tee off this year on May 27.

The tournament, which has raised over \$730,000 in the last 19 years, or approximately \$38,000 annually, will take place with three tee-times. Golfers will choose from the following tee-times: May 27 at 10 a.m. and May 28, at 7:30 a.m. or 1:30 p.m, according to Rita Miller, director of community relations at St. Francis.

There will also be a tee-off dinner held at the Maryville Community Center on May 27 at 6 p.m.

The tournament, which had over 400 participants in previous years, is focusing this year's earnings on the pur-

chasing of new equipment for the obstetrical patients at St. Francis. Pieces of equipment the hospital hopes to purchase includes a new birthing bed, fetal heart monitor and an obstetrical/gynecological stretcher, which would be used in the emergency department.

Miller hopes for yet another successful year at the tournament.

"We hope it raises the awareness of the need of support for the hospital," Miller said. "We want to provide quality care for patients [while] at the same time providing an outlet where people can visit Maryville, have fun, eat good food and see friends. We have a lot of people come back every year."

Miller hopes to create a special environment for the 20th anniversary of the tournament. This includes enhancing

the prizes and gifts given to participants and stepping up the quality of the tee-off dinner. Miller and the rest of the St. Francis staff appreciate all the successful years the tournament has brought.

"It's been our biggest fundraiser for the hospital foundation," Miller said. "It really has been instrumental in providing a level of technology for the hospital that may not have been there."

The Tobin family has helped the hospital and community out greatly, a fact Miller realizes and wants to recognize.

"We hope that the commu-



photo courtesy st. francis human resources

(FROM LEFT TO right) Al Tobin, Dave Kelso, Vince Tobin, and Bill Tobin pose after a successful 2009 Tobin Benefit Golf Classic. The tournament brought over 300 golfers out last year.

nity realizes the support the Tobin family has given us over the years," Miller said. "This

would be a great year to show how much that has meant to the community as a whole."

CAT WALK AND HUMAN SERVICES EXPO

Walk, Expo raise community's physical health awareness

By Trey Williams
Asst. News Editor

If finding time in a busy schedule to get out, walk and exercise is the problem, then clear the calendar for this Saturday from 8 to 11 a.m.

The Be Well Program along with St. Francis Hospital and Health Services will be hosting their annual 'Cat Walk and Human Services Expo. Matt Simmons, professor of health and physical education, said this is a three-hour event meant to encourage people to be active and raise awareness of the benefits.

"People walk around the track, and we play music and give away prizes," Simmons said.

The 'Cat Walk has been going on for about 20 years, according to Simmons who has been involved with it the last 10 and participated in it for approximately 12.

To go along with the walk, St. Francis Hospital and Health Services will be there to offer free blood pressure checks, bone density scans and lung function screenings.

St. Francis and the University teamed up several years ago for this event, according to St. Francis community relations and development director Rita Miller.

Miller said they (St. Francis) used to do their own fundraiser to raise awareness for Cystic Fi-

brosis, which according to www.cff.org, is an inherited disease that affects the lungs and digestive system of approximately 30,000 children and adults in the U.S.

The disease clogs the lungs and leads to life-threatening lung infections. It also obstructs the pancreas and stops natural enzymes from helping the body break down and absorb food.

St. Francis tries to raise awareness of Cystic Fibrosis and it is the main reason they give free lung function screenings. According to Miller, there are some staff members who have been affected by this disease.

"It really hits close to the

heart of some of the organizers who put it (health expo) on," Miller said.

Miller and Simmons said they have both seen an increase in the number of people who come out to participate. In the past four or five years, Simmons said they've had a pretty good turn out where a couple hundred people have shown up.

Simmons thinks joining forces with St. Francis has not only benefited this event in terms of the amount of people who show up, but also in the end results.

Simmons recalls several cases where people were not aware they had high blood pressure or low bone density until they got involved with the 'Cat Walk and

Human Services Expo, but then they were able to go see their doctor and find out what they needed to do to stay healthy.

"Why they're here helps them realize how easy it is to stay healthy," Simmons said. "You don't have to lift weights, or really go to the gym, just walking."

For those who have never participated, the health benefits, the social aspect and the knowledge you can gain is all worth the three hours according to Simmons.

"We love to have people come out and give it a try," Simmons said. "It's not competitive, it's just for fun, and we have fun give-aways."

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